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ABSTRACT

This report describes a project for improving classroom behavior through positive discipline. The action research will take place from September 2001 to December 2001. The targeted 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students live in the suburbs and are composed of low income, middle class, and high income communities. The problem was noted by researchers who found that student behavior impacts student/class performance. The problem was further documented through teacher journals, student journals, surveys, and behavior checklists. Analysis of the probable cause data, as well as professional literature revealed that several possible reasons exist for students inappropriate classroom behavior. Students lack of social experiences, student input to classroom environment, positive peer group interaction, and tolerance for diversity contributed to the deficiency of classroom climate. The solution strategies will consist of providing students with opportunities for involvement in classroom decision making, classroom meetings, cooperative skills, and development of positive social skills. The effects of these interventions will be demonstrated through classroom observational journals, teacher journals, individual and class processing worksheets, and classroom meetings. Nine appendixes are included containing surveys, processing worksheets and checklists, and journal reflection prompts. (Contains 28 references.) (Author/GCP)

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USING POSITIVE DISCIPLINE TO REDUCE DISRUPTIVE CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

St. Xavier University and Skylight
Field Based Master's Program
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This report describes a project for improving classroom behavior through positive discipline. The action research will take place from September 2001 to December 2001. The targeted 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students live in the suburbs and are composed of low income, middle class, and high income communities. The problem was noted by researchers who found that student behavior impacts student/class performance. The problem was further documented through teacher journals, student journals, surveys, and behavior checklists.

Analysis of the probable cause data, as well as professional literature revealed that several possible reasons exist for students' inappropriate classroom behavior. Students lack of social experiences, student input to classroom environment, positive peer group interaction, and tolerance for diversity contributed to the deficiency of classroom climate.

The solution strategies will consist of providing students with opportunities for involvement in classroom decision-making, classroom meetings, cooperative skills, and development of positive social skills.

The effects of these interventions will be demonstrated through classroom observational journals, teacher journals, individual and class processing worksheets, and classroom meetings.

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The targeted students of Site A, reading and language students in grades 7, Site B, special education students in grades 6-8, and Site C, reading and language students in grade 7, exhibit disruptive behaviors that interfere with social growth. Evidence of the existence of the problem included administrative discipline logs, teacher journals, team discipline logs, missing homework assignments, incomplete student assignment notebooks, and assessments that indicated the level of student performance.

Immediate Problem Context

The middle school represented by Site A was part of a small district with one elementary school and one middle school. The middle school was

located in the suburbs and was composed of low-income, middle-class, and high-income housing. This included subsidized rental units and condominiums, as well as middle-class and affluent homes. The school serviced grades five through eight with a total of 321 students. The average class size for the school was 24.7 students. The ethnic composition of the school population was 54% White, 27.1% African-American, 5.3% Hispanic, and 13.4% Asian/Pacific Islander. The population included 19.3% of students from low-income families. There were no Limited-English Proficient students in this school. The school had a 94.6% attendance rate for the previous school year with a 20.1% student mobility rate. Of the 321 students, four were considered chronic truants; this constituted 1.2% percent of the total enrollment of the school (State School Report Card, 2000).

The total number of faculty and staff employed by the district was 105. Of that, 3 were administrators, 2 were counselors, 44 were teachers, and 20 were aides to the teachers or support personnel. The average number of years of teaching experience was 10.7. The percentage of faculty with Bachelor's Degrees was 48.8%, and those with master's or higher was 51.2%. The racial background of the faculty was 98.6% White and 1.4% African-American. Males ma e up 14.4% of the teacher population, while 85.6% were female (School State Report Card, 2000).

The original school building was erected in 1908. An addition of two wings that became classrooms was added in 1955. This building was originally intended to be temporary structure. However, in 1977, the district

added a band room, a learning resource center, and a multi-purpose room, and thus enabled the district to further utilize the original structure. In 1994, the original structure and everything, except the latest additions, were demolished. A new bi-level structure was erected that gave the school an additional 25 classrooms, a gymnasium, and a cafeteria. The resource teachers and special program teachers had their own classrooms. The learning center housed the computer lab that had 31 computers available with Internet access. In addition to the main computer lab, there were five computers available in each grade level pod and 18 laptops with Internet access available for faculty and students.

Site A participated in the DARE Program where the students learned about drug and alcohol prevention. There was also an after school program for students who needed remediation based on ISAT test scores.

The Site B middle school was part of a large district with four elementary schools and one middle school. This was located in the suburbs and composed of middle-class and high-income housing. This included townhouses, middle- class homes, and affluent homes. The school serviced grades six through eight with a total of 881 students. The average class size for the school was 30.2. The ethnic make up of the school population was 84.3% White, 4.3% African-American, 2.5% Hispanic, 8.7% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.15% Native American. The population included 2.7% of students from low-income and 0.3% who were Limited-English proficient. The school had a 95.2% attendance rate for the previous year with a 7.2% mobility rate.

Of the 881 students, one was considered chronically truant; this constituted 0.1% of the total enrollment of the school (State School Report Card, 1999).

The total number of faculty and staff employed by the district was 255. Of that, 3 were administrators, 2 were counselors, 74 were teachers, and 31 were aides to the teachers or support personnel. The average number of years of teaching experience was 15.0. The percentage of faculty with Bachelor's Degrees was 41.6% and those with Master's Degrees or higher was 58.4%. The racial background of the faculty was 98.7% White, 0.6% African American, and 0.6% Asian/Pacific Islander. Males made up 10.7% of the teacher population, while 89.3% were female (School State Report Card, 1999). The school building was erected in 1962. The structure was a bi-level that consisted of 42 classrooms, a learning media center with a computer lab, two gymnasiums, a large group space, and a cafeteria. The resource teachers and special program teachers had their own classrooms. Throughout the building, there were Macintosh computers that had access to the Internet. The learning center housed a computer lab that had 25 computers. There were two other computer labs that each had 35 computers. Beside the main labs, each classroom had one computer available for faculty and students.

Site B had a before-school study program called Hoops and Homework. This program motivated students to do homework through basketball intramurals. This school also had an after-school study program for students who needed remediation.

The junior high represented by Site C was part of a district comprised of three elementary feeder schools and one junior high. It is the only junior high school in the unit district comprised of three elementary feeder schools. The junior high school feeds into two high schools that are located in nearby townships. The junior high was located in the suburbs and was composed of low- income, middle-class, and high-income housing. The school serviced grades seven and eight with a total of 400 students. The average class size in the eighth grade is 25 students. The ethnic composition of the student body was 74% White, 14% percent Asian/Pacific, 6.3 percent Hispanic, 5.5% African American, and .3% Native American. In addition to having a diverse ethnic composition, 4.3% of the students are from low-income homes and 4.3% of the students are Limited-English Proficient. The school had a 95.7% attendance rate for the previous school year and a 5.6% mobility rate. The number of faculty and staff employed by the district was 116. The racial background of the faculty was 99.1% White, and .9% African American. Females made up 87% of the teacher population, while 13% were male. The average years of experience of the teachers in the district is 12.6 years; 57.7% of the teachers had Bachelor's Degrees and 42.3% possessed a Master's Degree or higher. The average teacher salary for the district was $45,081. The average salary for administration was $93,032. The average expenditure per pupil was $3,997.

The placement options offered at the junior high are as follows: gifted, average, co-taught (a hybrid between special education and regular

education students), and two self-contained classes for learning and behavioral/emotional students. The structure was a one-story building that housed 34 classrooms, two gymnasiums, a large group space, a cafeteria, a computer lab large enough to accommodate an entire class, and each teacher had a computer in his/her classroom. All computers were connected to the Internet and offered a wide range of software from which to choose. Not only did the target school offer a wide menu of services academically, but extra curricular activities as well.

Site C had individual grade study level program to motivate students to do homework. The site also had an after school program for students who needed remediation.

Surrounding Community

Site A was part of a community of 9,341 residents. The average household income was $130,079. Forty-two percent of the population were homeowners, and 58% were renters. The socioeconomic status of the community covered the broadest spectrum from the very low to the highest in the area. There was very little supplementary tax-based revenue due to a lack of industry in the area. The school district covered 7.5 square miles. The elementary building had one administrator who was the principal. The middle school had two administrators. One was the principal of the middle school and the other was the district's superintendent. The average administrator's salary was $101,261, and the average per pupil expenditure was $6,596. One of the major issues in the district was the mobility rate of the students. Based

on information gathered from the superintendent of the district, students who were no longer in the district scored a 160.47 in reading, 157.94 in math, and 20.69 in writing. Those students who were in the district for one year or less scored 156.93 in reading, 160.14 in math, and 21.71 in writing. Those students who were in the district for two years or more scored 162.53 in reading, 163.98 in math, and 22.83 in writing. The scores indicated that students who stayed in the district had more success in their testing than students who had been in the district one year or less or than students who had left the school altogether. There was a lack of community support toward all aspects of education at the middle school. This adversely affected the educational climate in and out of the building.

Site B was part of a community of 25,673 residents. The average household income was $61,750. Seventy-six percent of the population were homeowners, and 24% were renters. The socioeconomic status of the community encompassed middle and upper-class. The tax base was very supportive of the educational community. This revenue was the result of support from industry, business, and one of the largest junior colleges in the country. The ethnicity of the community was 87.7% White, 3.7% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.4% Hispanic, 2.1% African American, 0.2% Native American, and 2.9% other. The school district covered 17.6 square miles. The four elementary school buildings had one administrator per building who was the principal. The middle school had three administrators, one principal, and two vice-principals. The average administrator's salary was $96,891. The average

per pupil expenditure was $6,368. The mobility rate of the community was 8.8% and had not contributed to discipline problems in the district.

Site C was part of a community with 20,556 residents. The average household income was 65,784. The majority of these households belonged to white-collar workers with the median age of 35. The targeted school was set in a suburban community. It was located 40 miles west of a major metropolitan city. The township was approximately 9 square miles. The ethnic make-up of the community was 71.5 percent White, 15.3 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 9.3 percent Latino, 3.0 percent Black, and no Indians or Eskimos. The community had high expectations of the schools. A referendum passed by 83 votes in 1995 to improve the schools and to keep certain extra-curricular activities for the students. With the referendum passed, property taxes increased for the community. The academic performance of the students on the national achievement tests was above-average. The seventh and eighth grade scores on the 2001 Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT) were higher than the state averages in math, reading, writing, science, and social science. (School Report Card , 2001). The targeted community was very interested in sports. The community had a very popular and strong park district sports program. (School Report Card, 2001).

National Context of the Problem

"American classrooms are frequently plagued by other more minor kinds of misbehavior, which disrupt the flow of classroom activities and

interfere with learning. Approximately one-half of all classroom time is taken up with activities other than instruction, and discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of this lost instructional time" (Cotton, 1990, p. 1). Discipline is a problem that has negatively affected America's classrooms. Continual behavior problems have interfered with the educational right of all persons involved. Teachers have struggled with keeping inappropriate behaviors out of the classroom, while trying to keep the disciplined child engaged.

According to Gaustad, in one academic year, six South Carolina schools calculated that students lost 7,932 instructional days to disruptions in class, and with in-school suspensions. Disruptions interrupted lessons for all students, leaving the student with inappropriate behaviors even farther behind (1992). Research supported these findings as representative of problems that have been recognized across the nation.

Inappropriate behaviors stemmed from students not respecting the academic environment. Students demonstrated inappropriate behaviors through non-compliant behaviors, physical outbursts, incomplete assignments, and off-task behaviors. Tulley and Chu's (1997) findings support this:

> The majority of discipline problems reported by students pertained to just three types of behaviors (disruption, defiance, aggression). The most frequently used and also the most effective of the strategies employed by teachers was the use of rote punishment (i.e. writing

> sentences, copying rules, etc.). Males and females were more similar than dissimilar in their description of discipline problems, and the strategies teachers used, and also in their perceptions of discipline problems of effectiveness and ineffectiveness of those strategies (p.168).

Legally, teachers are required to promote a classroom setting that encourages health and safety. A productive classroom fosters a positive learning environment for all participants. This allows all members 'the freedom to teach and to learn, thereby guaranteeing equal educational opportunity for all' (Souza, 2000, p. 36).

Behavior problems were easily recognized in classrooms throughout the country. Classrooms were spending more and more time attempting to correct behaviors and less time engaging students in constructive classroom activities that promoted the transfer of learning.

> From the moment he signs a contract, the teacher shares with the public school a tacit obligation to society. In the main, we allow ourselves to be governed by duly elected persons and their representatives. This is the only way our society can function in an orderly way. It is not good, therefore, that our young people become adept at the fine art of insurrection. The teacher who allows students to victimize him in his classroom indirectly encourages them to victimize the man at the newsstand, the stranger in the park, and the cop on his beat (McDaniel, 1994, p. *254).*

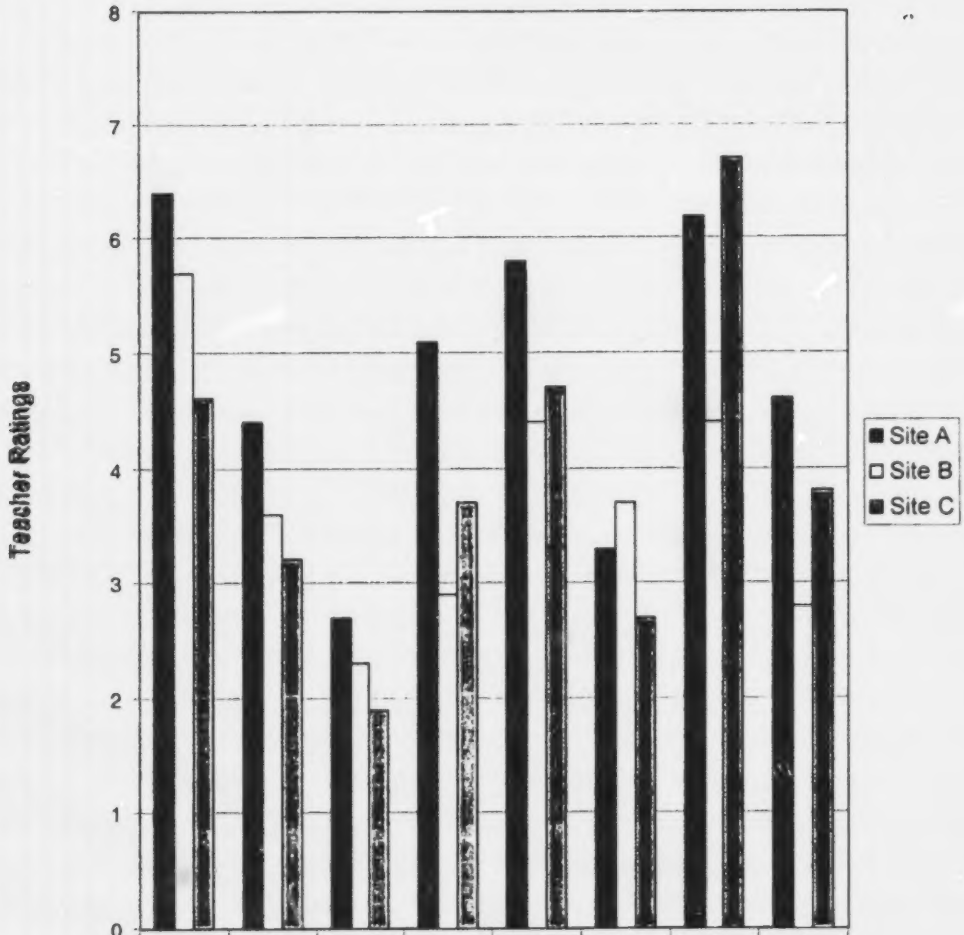
CHAPTER TWO

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

Inappropriate behaviors by students in the targeted schools were identified as detractors from students' social growth. Teachers, students, administrators, and parents expressed concern about the afore mentioned problem. Teacher concerns included talking out, distracting others, leaving seat without permission, and a lack of preparedness for class. As a result of these concerns, classroom-learning time was seriously hampered, student achievement was compromised, and the teacher's role as a facilitator was negated as they were forced to become a disciplinarian. Students indicated similar concerns. Less time spent on academics in class meant less one on one attention, more out-of-class time lost to work that was unaccomplished during class, less opportunity allowed for positive peer/teacher interactions. Problem documentation included: pre and post- teacher survey (Appendix B), pre and post- student survey (Appendix C), pre and post class processing

worksheet (Appendix D), teacher and student behavior tally worksheet (Appendix E). Other problem documentation included were teacher journal entries (Appendix F), student journal entries (Appendix G), student observational checklists (Appendix H) which were tabulated bi-weekly (Appendix I), and classroom meetings.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Site A	6.4	4.4	2.7	5.1	5.8	3.3	6.2	4.6
Site B	5.7	3.6	2.3	2.9	4.4	3.7	4.4	2.8
Site C	4.6	3.2	1.9	3.7	4.7	2.7	6.7	3.8

Survey Questions

Figure 1. Pre-teacher Survey Average Results per Site

Researchers studied the results of the pre and post-data. The teacher survey was administered in September (Appendix B). Survey results showed the primary concerns were talking out, searching for necessary materials, and distracting others. Site A found that of 20 teachers surveyed on a scale of 1 to 10 that talking out was ranked at 6.4; searching for materials was ranked at a 6.2; and distracting was ranked at a 5.8. Survey results showed the primary concerns were talking out, searching for necessary materials, and distracting others. Site B found that of 38 teachers surveyed on a scale of 1 to 10 that talking out was ranked at 5.7; searching for materials was ranked at a 4.4; and distracting was ranked at a 4.4. Survey results showed the primary concerns were talking out, searching for necessary materials, and distracting others. Site C found that of 27 teachers surveyed on a scale of 1 to 10 that talking out was ranked at 4.6; searching for materials was ranked at a 6.7; and distracting was ranked at a 4.7.

Table 1

Pre-student Survey Average Responses per Site

Question	Rank	Combined Average	SITE A Average	SITE B Average	SITE C Average
Talking Out	1	5.5	4.4	7.4	5.9
Teasing Others	7	3.1	3.6	3.4	2.6
Hitting Others	8	2.2	3.1	2.6	1.3
Leaving Seat	4	3.9	4.0	3.1	4.1
Distracting	3	4.0	3.7	4.1	4.1
Put Downs	5	3.4	3.4	5.4	2.3
Search For Materials	2	4.2	4.2	2.9	4.6
Late Arrivals	6	3.3	3.3	2.9	3.4

The targeted teachers based on the data collected from the targeted students, completed a statistical analysis (Appendix B). Student concerns paralleled that of the classroom teachers. Survey results showed the primary concerns were talking out, searching for necessary materials, and distracting others. Site A found that of 22 students surveyed on a scale of 1 to 10 that talking out was ranked at 4.4; searching for materials was ranked at a 4.2; and distracting was ranked at a 3.7. Survey results showed the primary concerns were talking out, searching for necessary materials, and distracting others. Site B found that of 7 students surveyed on a scale of 1 to 10 that talking out was ranked at 7.4; searching for materials was ranked at a 2.9; and distracting was ranked at a 4.1. Survey results showed the primary concerns were talking out, searching for necessary materials, and distracting others. Site C found that of 24 students surveyed on a scale of 1 to 10 that talking out was ranked at 5.9; searching for materials was ranked at a 4.6; and distracting was ranked at a 4.1.

Beginning in week three and extending through week 12, students were asked to journal on the various behavioral addresses as part of the class processing survey. The main topics of concern included talking out, lack of materials, and leaving one's seat. The researchers found reflections to be quite insightful and helpful to data collection. These also assisted in narrowing the focus of the action plan. When addressing the topic of talking out, one student offered, "Talking out is extremely disrespectful. It is a bad habit. It is not only disruptive to peers, but also to the teacher. All in all, it is a disruption

to the learning process." The second journal focused on leaving one's seat. "A definite problem in our class is leaving our seats. It is a distraction to others, to the teacher, and away from the lesson. Basically, it blocks a student's ability to think correctly." The third journal looked at a lack of preparedness. "Lacking materials can be bad and can be frustrating. It is a disruption to the teacher, the student, and to his or her peers. It shortens our class learning time. Having your materials in class is what is most needed in order to learn. Every time someone forgets something, the whole class learns less."

One student summed up the journaling process perfectly in a matter of two sentences. "I think we should learn to respect our teachers and their rules more. The rules that we established will help us to become better people."

Teachers and students monitored classroom behaviors throughout the thirteen weeks of the action plan. Teachers completed a pre and post-observational checklist, as well as every other week checklists. Every student had an opportunity to conduct classroom observations by being the classroom monitor. As a result, behavior was tracked daily.

Probable Causes

The targeted schools, Sites A, B, and C exhibited disruptive behavior that inhibited students social growth. A majority of teachers and students indicated that classroom disruption was a detriment to their learning experience. T.J. Lewis and G. Sugai stated,

> Unfortunately, not all children and youth have access to appropriate models, regular monitoring, regular academic and social success, and meaningful feedback. Instead, for some children, social experiences are bets characterized as reactive, aversive, infrequent, haphazard, and trial-and-error leaning experiences. In fact, children and youth who are at-risk of or display anti-social behavior are an ever-increasing concern in American schools and communities. To understand why children and youth engage in challenging behavior, researchers have established compelling evidence that parents and communities contribute to the development of the most severe forms of anti-social behavior by failing to provide necessary prerequisite social skills and support and by modeling inappropriate social skills (Focus on Exceptional Children, 1999, p. 2).

The inability to grow socially only hindered a child's ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with peers, teachers, and parents, hence hampering success in many scholastic arenas.

Though reports tended to lean towards a sense of community and unity to foster the establishment of positive relationships and social acceptances, the unfortunate reality was that there was a lack of consistency and support on multiple levels between the following: parents and teachers, parents and students, and teachers and students. Sesko, in the National Association of Secondary School Principals, reinforced this by contending that,

> We can not isolate a single cause for the current state of affairs. This

> societal illness is a multi-faceted monster, which must be attacked one facet at a time. At the risk of appearing to over simplify the problem, I suggest that in an attempt to do our part as educators in trying to curb the ever increasing violence in our schools, we start taking better care of lesser discipline problems that occur in our school everyday. Parents want more discipline in the schools, stricter adherence to 'get tough' rules, a 'get tough' policy for the troublemakers who are disrupting the schools. That is what they want, all right, up until the time when the 'get tough' discipline is to be meted out to their own "troublemakers" (p. 118).

With this lack of consistency, came a lack of communication. With this break down in communication, it only became natural for support and trust to be either diminished or destroyed. Based on these findings, the teachers in the targeted schools emphasized respect and open communication among students, parents, and teachers. Teachers in the targeted sites looked to create an environment for success through the development of social relationships at many levels.

> The impetus for current educational reform arises from various sources. For example, concern exists about dwindling funds, about ways to improve learner outcomes, and the overall quality about public instruction. Many such proposals come in response to the growing ethnic, racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity within the middle

school population. At the same time, there is a steady movement of students with disabilities from more-restrictive classrooms to less-restrictive classrooms (Gable & Manning, 2001, On-line).

The researchers of this action plan found this to ring very true in the learning environments. Most schools in today's society experienced an influx of individual and community needs that impacted behaviors on a daily basis. This, in turn, posed quite a challenge to the classroom teacher and students. The teachers were forced to individualize all lessons and strategies for dealing with behaviors and needed to be constantly aware of cultural issue that might have arisen. Students were affected in a similar manner, because they needed to be fully aware of each of their peers needs and their own needs.

Often, disruptive behaviors were not only the fault of student. Regardless of the teacher abilities to teach, occasionally teachers reverted to strategies that they felt comfortable using, even though the strategy had little effect. The teacher who seemed to have the most discipline problems had the least knowledge of their students and a lack of willingness to change to meet student needs. According to Alderman, "Unfortunately, many teachers inadvertently use inappropriate techniques. Their intentions are good, but their results are poor because of a lack of 'discipline basics.' Even teachers with good learning environments sometimes slip into poor discipline habits that detract from instruction" (The education digest, 2001, p 38). Day after

day, teachers expected nothing but the best from students. Unfortunately, educators taught them to do as told. not as modeled. The reality of it all was that attitude reflects leadership. When teachers sold themselves short, mediocrity led to nothing more than complacency.

> Because learning in schools is traditionally dominated and controlled by adults, students seldom make decisions about their own learning. Even though our philosophies of education purport to graduating students who are responsible citizens capable of participating thoughtfully in a democracy, our educational practices have a tendency to foster dependence, passivity, and a 'tell me what to do and think' attitude" (Barell, 2001, On-line).
>
> http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students
>
> /learning/lr200.htm)

The development of a class discipline program that had student input was integral to the overall success of a positive classroom atmosphere. Allowing students to partake in the establishment of expectations and consequences granted them the opportunity to feel ownership and pride in the class setting.

Chapter Three

The Solution Strategy

Research indicates numerous solution strategies that teachers put into place to promote social growth and a positive learning environment. Five solutions teachers can utilize to decrease negative behaviors and increase student interaction, communication, and positive social relationships are: providing an opportunity for positive social experiences, involvement of students in the decision-making process, acknowledging diversity, effective teacher techniques, and consistency.

The first solution was providing an opportunity for positive social experiences. Positive social experiences are an effective way for students to become productive and responsible learners. Teachers and students must

establish a set of mutual expectations to accomplish this goal. These expectations must be easily understood and teach students to be accountable. Consequences for rule violations should be established and enforced consistently (Thompson, & Walter, 1998).

According to Johnson and Johnson as sited in Bassett and McWhirter (1999), the classroom cooperative learning environment must consist of five basic elements:

1. Positive group interdependence
2. Face to face interaction
3. Individual accountability
4. Development of effective social skills
5. Group goals toward improvement

Mayer (1999) suggested that schools often assumed that students understood or knew how to behave. These standards were usually communicated indirectly instead of directly. To increase the likelihood of precise communication of these expectations, there are several procedures that can be implemented. First, all involved parties should be represented. Second, a draft of all established consequences should be distributed to all staff, students, and parents. Lastly, these consequences must be reviewed and approved by all involved.

One strategy is to view the rule making process as a potential learning experience, not as an administrative chore. Instead of distributing rules as an edict, schools can encourage teachers, students, and families to

> work together in the rule-making process. Such involvement must be genuine and include all students, not be limited to just a few students in student government (Latham, 1998, p.104).

The second solution was the involvement of students in the decision making process. According to Browning, Davis, and Resta children must learn to be responsible for conflict resolution. Students take ownership of their problems a little at a time. They develop problem-solving skills by discovering resolutions that work. Problem solving skills become more effective when teachers appreciate the need to train students and give them chances to perfect.

Tully and Chiu (1997) found that teachers often took too much of a role in determining the types of disciplinary approaches that were executed in their classrooms. Teachers have also been found to work with approaches that are more traditional and comfortable, rather than exploring different, and often times, more effective strategies. To be more productive, discipline approaches need to be more student-focused and less teacher-generated. Cooperation is the key. Teacher and students need to communicate to understand the importance of the individual and the environment of interrelationships.

Sylwester reinforced Tully and Chiu's findings by stating that classroom management should be viewed as a cooperative environment that

manages to balance curriculum and student involvement. This way, the child learns to co-exist positively with his/her peers, to share responsibilities, and to resolve their own disagreements.

The student must be engaged in a manner that keeps them interested and active. By allowing them a chance to be part of establishing class rules, understanding and appreciating the differences of their classmates, and comprehending the need for consistency from the teacher, students learn to prevent problems from occurring as often. Students that knew their teachers were consistent, yet fair and open, were less likely to be oppositional as a result (1999, Gazin).

The third solution was to acknowledge diversity. Fashola and Slavin believed that in building a school-wide model of reform, there are three key types of interventions schools should look for:

1. Improving the quality of classroom instruction
2. Helping struggling students catch up with their peers by including individualized assistance to the needs of individual students.
3. Engaging parents in supporting their children's success in school and to solve non-academic problems that could interfere with children's school performance (1998).

In the report "Turning Points," addressed by Gable and Manning, it was found that middle schools no longer focused primarily on the academic needs

of students. It suggested establishing small communities that learned to succeed both in school and the public setting. Teachers need to appreciate differences in the students and not just teach curriculum. Diversity includes those that have learning or behavioral disabilities.

> .Teachers, and particularly teachers of students with emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD), are increasingly faced with challenges regarding the instruction and management of their students. Although teachers have at
> their disposal an endless list of interventions to address students academic and behavioral needs, these interventions often lack empirical support (Sutherland, 2000).

Mayer suggested that teachers were instructed to recognize and address individual differences and apply appropriate behavior strategies. The strategies include:

1. Increasing rates of positive praise and recognition.
2. Identifying effective reinforcers.
3. Emphasizing the need of social skills training.
4. Using various groupings

Current theory and practice advocates establishing a discipline policy that focuses on the students' needs, not on the teachers' wants. Consistency has been found to be the key to running an effective classroom and avoiding poor teacher techniques. By aiming high and following through, students behaved better and teachers educated more effectively (Churchwood 1998).

In essence, teacher and students need to discuss, create, and agree upon the expectations, rules, and consequences within their classroom. The more open and consistent teachers are, the more effective they are.

T. Alderman concurred and took it a step further, "Public rules, private discipline. Rules should be publicized to all students; discipline was usually more effective if it was administered privately" (38, 2001). Teachers lost power and respect when consequences were handled in a public forum. In its simplest form, it was the rule that was to be emphasized, not the problem. The positive accomplishments of the classroom were to be acknowledged and praised, not the problem behaviors. Positivity equaled power.

Wasicsko and Ross (1994) went beyond just a couple of suggestions for alleviating poor teacher techniques. Positive examples included: expecting the best from students, focusing on good, not bad, removing privileges, being consistent, knowing your students, and respecting self and others. They created a list of how a teacher could be assured of disciplinary problems within the classroom. They identified 10 key problems that could take away from teacher/student success. Unfortunately, teachers have all been guilty of some of these in their pasts:

> Creating classroom discipline problems is easy. By following the ten simple rules listed, you should be able to substantially improve your skill at this popular teacher past-time.
>
> 1. Expect the worst from kids. This will keep you on guard at all times.
> 2. Never tell students what is expected of them. Kids need to learn to

figure things out for themselves.

1. Punish and criticize kids often. This better prepares them for real life.
4. Punish the whole class when one student misbehaves. All other students were probably doing the same thing or at least thinking about doing it.
5. Never give students privileges. It makes students soft, and they will just abuse privileges anyway.
6. Punish every misbehavior you see. If you don't, the students will take over.
7. Threaten and warn kids often. 'If you aren't good, I'll keep you after school for the rest of your life.'
8. Use the same punishment for every student. If it works for one, it will work for all.
9. Use schoolwork as punishment. 'Okay, smarty, answer all the questions in the book for homework.'
10. Maintain personal distance from student. Familiarity breeds contempt, you know .

Obviously, this was compiled in a sarcastic nature, yet it rang very true. No one teacher deliberately fell into these traps for failure, but they do frequently occur in classrooms everyday. These researchers suggested that a majority of disciplinary problems are actually originated and perpetuated by teachers

who inadvertently use the above-mentioned discipline strategies. Being simple, concrete, and straightforward again helped to assure success.

Eleven techniques for achieving effective classroom management and control were offered by B. Churchwood (1998). Suggestions included making sure both the teachers' lesson and the students are focused, establishing direct instruction as a forum for discussion and assurance of student involvement and understanding, and monitoring class behavior and progress. Other ideas were non-verbal cueing, positive discipline (not reinforcing negative actions), low profile intervention, and use of I-messages. Another important concept alluded to was that of proper modeling. "Values are caught, not taught." If teachers, maintain decided, yet cheerful environmental control, they hopefully rewarded with positive social and academic outcomes.

The last solution addressed in the research focused on lack of consistency and support for the classroom teacher. The establishment was important, especially when dealing with disciplinary codes. Consistency depended on the entire faculty knowing and implementing the disciplinary codes. Teachers were assured that consist action was taken by administration when a student was sent to the office or when they felt they needed support in the classroom (Mayer, 1999).

As stated by Latham, "Bloomfield-Jones notes that teachers who respond consistently to all infractions homogenize these same types of differences in students, thereby failing to treat the students as unique members of a learning community. Teachers should treat all students fairly,

but need to be flexible enough to adapt to meets individual needs. Discipline systems should be viewed as works in progress, subject to constant review and revision as the needs of the school community change" (1998).

Though consistency does depend on everyone in a school, it must first start with the individual teacher. Teachers need to be direct, yet understanding. The ability to feel with a student, rather than for a student ensures a positive relationship between teacher and student. As reviewed in previous solutions to the problem, teachers restated the rules that were violated and discussed consequences for the infraction. If done correctly, both teacher and student establish a proactive, not reactive, relationship (Harding, 2000).

Students that believed educators wanted them to be in school, be successful, and enjoy learning did just that. Also, educators acted as models and displayed behaviors they expected from students. When there is not positive support from adults and peers, behaviors reflect the negative influences (Harding, 2000).

Project Objectives

As a result of an increased awareness in the necessity for appropriate classroom behavior, positive peer social interaction, and consistency in classroom communication during the period of September 2001 to December 2001, the sixth, seventh and eighth grade students from the regular and special education targeted classes will increase positive

classroom behaviors as measured by teacher and student surveys, teacher and student journals, and individual and class processing behavior checklists.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following strategies are necessary:

1. Students will participate in classroom decision making and cooperative groups that will focus on development of positive social skills.
2. Students will participate in classroom meetings.
3. Students will participate in reflective journal writing.

Action Plan

September 2001

Week One

Review returned parent consent forms and discuss action plan with students.

Review school rules.

As a class, develop and post classroom rules using positive language.

Begin teacher journaling.

Week Two

Introduce classroom meetings as a tool for open-forum discussion.

Continue review of classroom rules.

Complete student questionnaire.

Week Three

Introduce cooperative learning.

Continue review of classroom rules.

Focus lessons to address chosen social skills (will be utilized throughout course of the action plan).

Begin student journals to be used as a reflection on classroom behavior.

Introduce observational checklists. These will be used to monitor classroom behavior.

Weeks Four through Twelve

Continue classroom meetings.

Continue student journals.

Continue teacher journals.

Continue observational checklists

The following skills will be addressed through the course of the next 8 weeks: Communication Skills, Basic Interaction Skills, Conflict Resolutions Skills, and Team Building Skills.

Students will be introduced to and assist in development of graphic organizers.

Week Four

Review classroom rules in cooperative group format.

Begin tabulating teacher surveys.

Address a behavior from Individual Class Processing Piece. These will be used every other week. Select from talking out, teasing others, hitting others, leaving seat, distracting, put downs, search for materials, and late arrivals.

October 2001

Week Five

Students will generate social skill to be addressed.

Students will select format for addressing social skills (cooperative groups, pairs, and whole class discussion).

Week Six

Continue to address behavior from class processing piece.

Teacher has flexibility to select topic based on current issues in the class.

Tabulate quantitative and qualitative data.

Week Seven

Conduct pre-planned classroom meeting. Topic will address broader issues as found in Probable Causes such as: peer pressure, diversity, and relationship skills.

Connect social skills to current unit, if applicable.

Week Eight

Continue to address behavior from class processing piece.

Teacher has flexibility to select topic based on current issues in his/her respective class.

Tabulate quantitative and qualitative data.

November 2001

Week Nine

Students will generate social skill to be addressed.

Students will select format for addressing social skills (cooperative groups, pairs, and whole class discussion).

Week Ten

Continue to address behavior from class processing piece.

Teacher has flexibility to select topic based on current issues in his/her respective class.

Tabulate quantitative and qualitative data.

Week Eleven

Conduct pre-planned classroom meeting. Topic will address broader issues as found in Probable Causes such as: peer pressure, diversity, and relationship skills.

Connect social skills to current unit, if applicable.

Week Twelve

Continue to address behavior from class processing piece.

Teacher has flexibility to select topic based on current issues in his/her respective class.

Tabulate quantitative and qualitative data.

Week Thirteen

Tabulate and organize final results of assessment.

Students will write post-journal reflections.

Teachers will write post-journal reflections.

Class to discuss results of action research project.

Methods of Assessment

The following assessments will be used to measure the effectiveness of positive discipline in a classroom environment.

Pre and post student questionnaire (Appendix C)

Pre and post teacher survey (Appendix B)

Teacher journal entries (Appendix F)

Student journal entries (Appendix G)

Student observational checklists (cooperative group, classroom) (Appendix D)

Classroom meetings

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of Intervention

The objective of this project was to improve classroom behavior through positive discipline. To accomplish the objective, the following strategies were applied: cooperative learning and classroom meetings, student participation in class decision-making, and reflective journals.

The first strategy used to accomplish the objective was cooperative learning and classroom meetings. Cooperative learning activities were used as needed throughout the study to enhance the student social skills. The teachers and students introduced and modeled social skills such as using appropriate voices, using positive words, and staying on-task using the behavior checklist.

Students presented their behavior checklist findings in class and were involved in group discussions after each meeting to reinforce the objective of the desired social skill.

Student involvement in classroom decision-making was the second strategy used by students and teachers to foster a positive environment. Each student was given the opportunity to participate in the development of classroom rules and in the establishment of positive/appropriate, yet effective, consequences. The teachers and students agreed upon a manageable and attainable disciplinary model. These were posted and consistently reviewed throughout the course of the study.

The last strategy used was reflective journal writing. Some of the reflective pieces utilized were observational checklists, class-processing sheets, pre and post-journal activities, bi-weekly processing sheets. Social skill journals and teacher journals were also used as reflective pieces. The students completed journal writings on necessitated social skills. Evaluation of students' progress was completed using a checklist for pre and post-assessments.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Prior to the intervention, student and teacher surveys (Appendices B and C) were given. These surveys assessed the behaviors displayed in the educational setting.

One way the intervention was assessed was through cooperative learning activities and classroom meetings. Students participated in these meetings and evaluated their cooperative learning skills using an observational checklist (Appendix D). The teacher also evaluated the

students' progress through class discussion and the processing of the checklist. The checklist targeted the areas of talking out, teasing others, hitting others, leaving seat, distracting, put downs, search for materials, and late arrivals. The teachers' ultimate goal was to perpetuate a continual growth in a positive direction.

Another way the researchers assessed the intervention was through student involvement in the decision-making process. Each student was given the opportunity to participate in the development of classroom expectations and in the establishment of positive/appropriate, yet effective, consequences. These expectations were generated to promote the transfer of practiced social skills. In addition, expectations also focused on increased preparedness and reduction of off-task behaviors. The teachers and students agreed upon a manageable and attainable discipline model. These were posted and consistently reviewed throughout the course of the study.

Lastly, reflective journals were used to assess the intervention. The students completed a weekly journal on the desired behavior from the individual class-processing piece. The teachers also examined broader issues as found in our Probable Causes section such as: peer pressure, diversity, and relationship skills. The teachers also had the flexibility to select topics based on areas of concern in these respective classrooms. Students' ability to reflect on their growth and development was demonstrated through

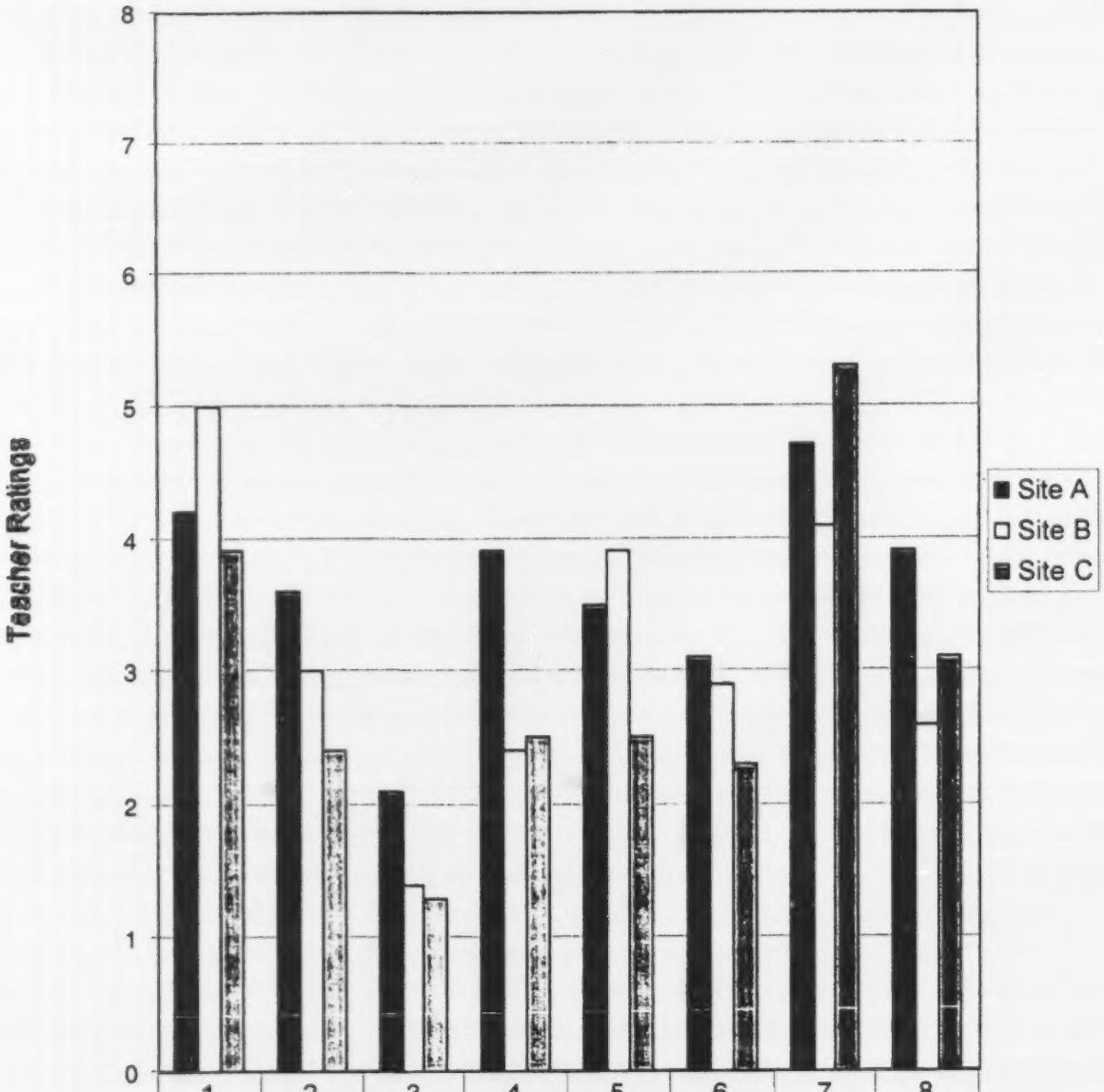
classroom meetings, observational checklists, and journal entries. The teachers assessed students' progress through daily observations and anecdotal notes.

Table 2

Post-student Survey Average Responses per Site

Question	Rank	Combined Average	SITE A Average	SITE B Average	SITE C Average
Talking Out	1	4.6	3.2	5.8	4.8
Teasing Others	6	2.4	2.4	2.8	2.0
Hitting Others	8	1.5	2.1	1.4	1.1
Leaving Seat	5	2.5	2.4	1.9	3.3
Distracting	2	3.2	2.7	2.9	4.1
Put Downs	3	3.2	2.8	4.6	2.1
Search For Materials	7	2.2	2.2	1.9	2.4
Late Arrivals	4	2.9	2.9	2.6	3.3

In analysis of the Pre and Post-Intervention Student Surveys (Appendix C), students observed a decrease in the following detrimental behaviors: talking out, teasing others, hitting others, leaving seat, distracting, put downs, search for materials, and late arrivals (Table 2).



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Site A	4.2	3.6	2.1	3.9	3.5	3.1	4.7	3.9
Site B	5	3	1.4	2.4	3.9	2.9	4.1	2.6
Site C	3.9	2.4	1.3	2.5	2.5	2.3	5.3	3.1

Figure 2. Post-teacher Survey Averages Results per Site

In the analysis of the Pre and Post-Teacher Survey (Appendix B), the teachers also observed a decrease in all targeted areas, as listed above.

Though all were a concern to the researchers, problems occurring in the classroom caused them focus more closely on talking out, distracting, and search for materials (Figure 2).

In the analysis of the pre and post -class processing journal reflection students shifted from a negative outlook to a positive one based on the various interventions taken during the course of action research. When asked for a description of the classrooms, students responded with such negative responses as "bad," "extremely off-task," "too talkative," very loud and disrespectful," and "rude." In the post reflection, researchers found students to see the classroom environment in a much more positive light; student comments included: "everyone is really helpful," "the classroom is quieter and easier to work in," "we get more done," "kids are nicer," and "I feel like I fit in." Also, as part of the class processing reflection, students were asked to select words that best described their feelings during class. Again, the results reflected an upswing in the positive and a downswing in the negative responses.

Table 3

Monthly Student Observed Behaviors

	Noted Behaviors	*Site A*	Site B	Site C	Average
September (Pre)	Talking Out	64	30	61	51.67
	Teasing Others	18	12	16	15.33
	Hitting Others	3	2	2	2.33
	Leaving Seat	51	27	46	41.33
	Distracting	74	32	69	58.33
	Put Downs	7	7	5	6.33
	Search for Materials	47	35	43	41.67
	Late Arrivals	4	3	5	4
October (During)	Talking Out	51	25	53	43
	Teasing Others	9	10	12	10.33
	Hitting Others	1	2	1	1.33
	Leaving Seat	33	21	36	30
	Distracting	59	27	61	49
	Put Downs	3	5	3	3.67
	Search for Materials	35	28	38	33.67
	Late Arrivals	3	3	4	3.33
November (Post)	Talking Out	21	17	26	21.33
	Teasing Others	3	7	9	6.33
	Hitting Others	0	1	1	0.67
	Leaving Seat	18	14	21	17.67
	Distracting	38	20	39	32.33
	Put Downs	1	3	2	2
	Search for Materials	23	17	25	21.67
	Late Arrivals	1	2	2	1.67

Table 4

Monthly Teacher Observed Behaviors

	Noted Behaviors	***Site A***	**Site B**	***Site C***	***Average***
September (Pre)	Talking Out	53	27	59	46.33
	Teasing Others	12	9	13	11.33
	Hitting Others	3	2	3	2.67
	Leaving Seat	64	23	41	42.67
	Distracting	47	19	52	39.33
	Put Downs	12	13	9	11.33
	Search for Materials	39	28	37	34.67
	Late Arrivals	4	3	5	4
October (During)	Talking Out	41	23	48	37.33
	Teasing Others	8	9	12	9.67
	Hitting Others	2	1	3	2
	Leaving Seat	47	18	35	33.33
	Distracting	39	18	36	31
	Put Downs	9	10	7	8.67
	Search for Materials	31	26	31	29.33
	Late Arrivals	2	3	4	3
November (Post)	Talking Out	28	17	30	25
	Teasing Others	4	5	8	5.67
	Hitting Others	0	1	1	0.67
	Leaving Seat	19	11	22	17.33
	Distracting	14	12	24	16.67
	Put Downs	6	7	5	6
	Search for Materials	19	16	20	18.33
	Late Arrivals	1	2	2	1.67

In the analysis of the observational checklists and behavior tally sheets, (Tables 3 and 4) both students and teachers observed and recorded disruptive behaviors during the class period. These were the same behaviors initially presented in the student/teacher surveys: talking out, teasing others, hitting others, leaving seat, distracting, put downs, search for materials, and late arrivals. As also indicated in the post-surveys, Sites A, B, and C discovered considerable decreases in the noted behaviors.

Table 5
Class Processing Response Journals

Class Processing Journal Response Word Choices	Pre-Journal Reflection Results	Post-Journal Reflection Results
Happy	62.3%	89.2%
Indifferent	1.9%	1.8%
Curious	43.4%	61.4%
Bored	28.3%	14.2%
Concerned	18.9%	73.2%
Eager	30.1%	46.7%
Studious	9.4%	9.7%
Worried	9.4%	4.1%
Positive	47.1%	91.6%
Conscientious	5.7%	18.7%
Lost	16.9%	3.2%
Negative	5.7%	0.4%
Caring	39.6%	71.3%
Misunderstood	3.8%	3.6%
Humorous	41.5%	47.9%

However, the individual class-processing checklist (Table 5) was not only a tool to collect data qualifiably. At the end of the checklist, students were asked to reflect upon overall class behavior and appropriate means to improve the class situation (Appendix G). The student responses served as an insightful indicator of what was truly going on in the classrooms at a given time. In the earliest stages (weeks one through three), students noted that the overall behavior was "disruptive," "loud," and "made it hard to get work done." Suggestions to improve the class included: "give lots of detentions," "give more homework to the bad kids," and "send them to the principal." In the middle of the action research (weeks four through eight), students indicated that there was definitely improvement occurring in the classroom. Comments about behavior included: "it's better than it was," "kids are trying," and "people still talk when they're not supposed to." Suggestions for classroom improvement were: "keep having class meetings because we get to say what we want," "have teacher/student conferences," and "use cooperative groups and journals, because we can share with our friends and write down our own ideas." At the end of the action plan (weeks 10 through 13), students' felt they had improved as a class: "there really weren't any problems today," "everyone got along good," "we got a lot done," and "I can talk to everybody." Final suggestions for class improvement included: "use cooperative groups all the time," "keep using the checklists and meetings," and "I really don't have any suggestions because things are better."

The researchers at Sites A, B, and C reported very similar results as the journals were reflected upon as the teacher portion of the qualitative data of the action plan. These reflections served as a perfect reinforcement to the quantitative data collected on the teacher observational checklists and behavior tally sheets. As presented in Chapter 2, all researchers experienced serious behavioral problems that hampered progress in the classroom on a daily basis. Each of the researchers maintained logs, journals, and the anecdotal notes to monitor the anticipated progress of each of the given classes. Brief notes and logs were jotted down on a daily basis to ensure the validity of progress in the classrooms. It was the longer, more thorough, weekly reflective journals, however, that served as the true measuring stick of the positive strides being made by students. The following paragraphs again resonate the actual results of the early stages, middle stages, and final stages of the action plan for each of the researchers.

During the first three weeks of the action research being implemented, the teacher/researcher at Site A noted that "the classroom was extremely frustrating to work with at times. I am finding the students to be completely disrespectful to both their classmates and myself. I am hoping that this action plan is a success, as it will be a difficult, if not an unsuccessful year if things do not improve." The thoughts of the teacher/researcher at Site B mirrored that of Site A. "My kids are a handful this year. I say one thing...they do another! I am having a lot of problems with talking out and kids wandering around the room without permission. We will definitely have to work on this

and focus on this as we begin to address specific social skills and appropriate behaviors." Lastly, Site C echoed that of the colleagues found at Sites A and B. "I realize that it is early on in the school year, but I am still worried that it will be very hard for students to get their work done if things continue to escalate. Quite honestly, I hope that I am able to stay true to the demands of our action research. It's going to be awfully difficult to stay positive in the midst of all of these negative behaviors!" The results of these comments illustrate the need for drastic action to be taken in each of the three classrooms. Luckily, things did begin to improve during the course of the following weeks.

In the middle of the action research, which accounted for weeks four through eight, the teachers/researchers had the positive disciplinary strategies well under way and were finally starting to see the direct results. The teacher/researcher at Site A noted visible improvements with the class as a result of the implemented plan. "I am pleased with the progress of my students. We have worked together to create a much more productive classroom environment. They are working towards establishing a place where they can help themselves, help me, and help each other!" Site B experienced a visible change as well. "The kids really have enjoyed taking a real part in the classroom. We have worked together to establish class rules and, in turn, the accompanying consequences for negative behaviors. They are more accepting of things when they have had a say in the way things run. I just hope things continue this way." Lastly, Site C was in accordance with the

findings of the previous two teachers/researchers. "The classroom meetings really seem to work. Factor in the journals we have been doing, and I'd say we are quite a success right now. My students seem more open to new ideas and are sharing with myself and their classmates. I am not going to say we are this super close-knit, 'touchy-feely' group, but I have seen definite growth in becoming a more caring class as a whole." Progress was made in Sites A, B, and C, as reflected by the three teacher/researchers. This paralleled directly with the comments made by students in their journals and reinforced the quantitative data presented as a result of the checklists and tally sheets. The positive results of the study were even more defined at the end of the action plan.

In the concluding weeks of the action research, which included weeks 10, 11, 12, and 13, the teacher notes, logs and journals all showed that the teachers/researchers at Sites A, B, and C had all reaped the rewards of implementing positive discipline in their respective classrooms. At Site A, the conclusions were as follows: "I feel like the last three months have paid off ten-fold! We worked together to create a plan based on the research we studied. We then applied it to our individual classroom needs and followed through all the way until the end. My students are both happy and productive. I will continue to use our positive disciplinary strategies throughout the remaining year and for years to come." The teacher/researcher at Site B inferred similar successes: "I really couldn't be much happier with the results. Sure there are a few things I'd like to do differently, but all in all, this action

plan worked phenomenally. I look forward to adding new strategies to my positive discipline repertoire. The textbook for Positive Discipline had tons of suggestions and I can't wait to try them." Finally, Site C summarized the findings in the subsequent manner: "I've always believed that respect is a two-way street. You give it...You get it! Now, my kids are believers as well. I'm really proud of these kids. They've worked really hard to correct their misbehaviors and to replace them with positive ones. I'm also proud of myself. We've created a system/program that is a success. On top of that, it is adaptable for all. I plan to share this with other teachers in my school." Obviously, the implemented action plan worked fortuitously in varying degrees for each of the researchers. The best part, however, was that all involved experienced improvement in the classroom. In addition, the qualitative and quantitative data for the teachers correlated to that of the students.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data, students in Sites A, B, and C showed an increase in positive behaviors and displayed fewer disruptive behaviors. Using positive disciplinary strategies, students demonstrated the understanding of the need for and use of social skills. With this understanding, came a desire to take ownership in the learning environment. Ownership breeds responsibility, and responsibility leads to a positive social climate.

Using cooperative learning and classroom meetings, students were able to discuss their feelings about the learning environment. When students are able to share, they, in turn, feel comfortable expressing individual opinions.

Cooperative groups and classroom meetings opened an effective means for communicating suggestions that dealt with problems with peers, class behavior expectations, consequences, and learning activities.

This tied directly to allowing students to take part in the decision-making process. When students possessed a true voice in the daily routines, they developed a sense of pride, self-worth, and began to gain respect for the learning environment. Once the intrinsic motivation was established the development of team and community emerged. When this bond was secured, there was a perfect balance between the role of the individual and that of the team player.

Lastly, researchers utilized reflective journals as a tool for keeping the lines of communication open. These journals were used to aid in the internalization of behaviors and how they effected themselves and others. These strategies served as a means to address the Probable Causes discussed in Chapter 2.

A major concern was the inability of students to grow socially. Researchers found this to be detrimental due to a number of disruptive behaviors. To alleviate this problem, researchers used cooperative groups and classroom monitors. The cooperative groups gave students an

opportunity to interact with their peers and work productively with others. The role of classroom monitor gave each individual student an predetermined behavioral expectations. The community was another concern that was addressed with classroom meetings. Consequently, the researchers noted a decrease in behavioral referrals and an increased awareness of others' needs in Sites A, B, and C. Two other areas of concern directly related to one another were lack of consistency and diversity. To minimize these concerns, the researchers used journals to address social skill needs of the individual classes. In turn, there was an understanding of the manner in which one impacts all. Thus, the researchers were able to address individual needs and the needs of the community learning environment. Teacher error due to improper/negative discipline was a real concern to both students and teachers. To abate this problem, student and teacher journals were used on a regular basis. This served as an avenue for all to reflect on the progress being made on a weekly basis. The final probable cause dealt with student ownership of behavior versus a lack of belonging. Class rules and consequences were developed during class meetings so that all students could experience a feeling of belonging in the learning environment. This reinforced the overall goal to become more productive and less disruptive.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
Saint Xavier University
Consent to participate in a Research Study
Using Positive Discipline to Reduce Disruptive Classroom Behaviors

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

I am currently enrolled in a Master's Degree program administered by St. Xavier University and Skylight Publishing. The program is intended to help me examine and improve the practice of my profession. A major component of the program requires me to design and carry out a project and issue that directly impacts my teaching. I have chosen to examine ways to develop positive classroom behaviors.

The purpose of this project is to help me determine how service learning, cultural awareness, and character development can make an impact on the students. I will use the results of my study to guide future teaching decisions.

I will be conducting my project from September to December 2001. During this time, I will be teaching students how to work in cooperative groups. The students will develop and utilize social skills.

These activities will all take place within the regular instructional periods within the day and all members will participate. The activities will not in anyway interfere with or replace any of the regular curriculum or instructional material.

Your permission allows me to include you student in the information gathered for my project. All the information gathered will be confidential and done within the confines of my work as your student's teacher. All data included in reports of the project will be anonymous and grouped so that no individual will ever be identified. Th report will be used to share with others what I have learned about my own teaching as a result of the project.

If you would like any further information about the project, I would be happy to discuss it with you. I am excited about this opportunity to improve my work as a professional and I appreciate your time and interest in my project.

Sincerely,

Renee Brennan
Jeff Dworak
Scott Reinhart

Appendix B

Teacher Survey

Name:_____
Date:_____
Grade level:_____
Subject Taught _____

Please rate the following criteria as it relates to behaviors displayed in the classroom.

1. Talking Out

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

2. Teasing Others

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

3. Hitting Others

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

4. Leaving Seat

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

5. Distracting

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

6. Put Downs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

7. Search for Materials

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

8. Late Arrivals

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

Appendix C

Student Survey

Name:_____
Date:_____
Grade level:_____

Please rate the following criteria as it relates to behaviors displayed in the classroom.

1. Talking Out

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

2. Teasing Others

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

3. Hitting Others

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

4. Leaving Seat

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

5. Distracting

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

6. Put Downs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

7. Search for Materials

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

8. Late Arrivals

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Never			Sometimes					Always	

Appendix D

CLASS PROCESSING WORKSHEET
PRE AND POST JOURNAL REFLECTION

The purpose of this worksheet is to determine if members of the class are behaving in a manner appropriate for learning.
DIRECTIONS - Answer the following questions on your own. The results of this worksheet will be discussed at a class meeting.

1. Name _____

2. Class Title _____

3. In your opinion, how would you describe the behavior of this class?

_____

_____

_____

4. What are examples of actions you need to take to make sure that you can learn in this classroom?

_____

_____

_____

5. What are examples of requests your teacher asks of you?

_____

_____

_____

6. Which of the following words best describes you? Circle the words that describe your feelings during class.

happy	bored	Studious	conscientious	caring
indifferent	concerned	Worried	lost	misunderstood
curious	eager	Positive	negative	humorous

7. What changes can you make in yourself to make this class better?

_____

_____

Appendix E

PRE-ACTION PLAN TALLY SHEET

TOTALS

1. Talking Out _____ _____
2. Teasing Others _____ _____
3. Hitting Others _____ _____
4. Leaving Seat _____ _____
5. Distracting _____ _____
6. Put Downs _____ _____
7. Search for Materials _____ _____
8. Late Arrivals _____ _____

POST-ACTION PLAN TALLY SHEET

TOTALS

1. Talking Out _____ _____
2. Teasing Others _____ _____
3. Hitting Others _____ _____
4. Leaving Seat _____ _____
5. Distracting _____ _____
6. Put Downs _____ _____
7. Search for Materials _____ _____
8. Late Arrivals _____ _____

Appendix F

Week of _____

Actions Taken:

PLUSES (+)	MINUSES (-)	INTERESTING (?)

Appendix G

STUDENT JOURNAL REFLECTION

Date: _____

Social Skill Covered: _____

Reaction to Today's Discussion/Lesson:

Today's Prompt:

Appendix H

INDIVIDUAL CLASS PROCESSING
CHECK LIST

_____
Student's Name

_____
Teacher's Name

_____
Class Title

Your job today is to determine how well the class is functioning. To do this, you will be the process evaluator for the period. The reason for this evaluation is to monitor, and in turn, bring greater awareness of our classroom needs.

DIRECTIONS – In the spaces below put a tick mark each time you observe one of the behaviors listed. At the conclusion of the observation period, you will answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

	TOTALS
1. Talking Out	
2. Teasing Others	
3. Hitting Others	
4. Leaving Seat	
5. Distracting	
6. Put Downs	
7. Search for Materials	
8. Late Arrivals	

1. What is your opinion of the behavior today?

2. What suggestions can you make for the teacher to improve the class?

3. What suggestions can you make for the class to improve the environment?

4. What will you do to improve the class?

Appendix I

BI-WEEKLY TALLY SHEET FOR INDIVIDUAL PROCESSING CHECKLIST – Date_____

TOTALS

1. Talking Out _____ _____
2. Teasing Others _____ _____
3. Hitting Others _____ _____
4. Leaving Seat _____ _____
5. Distracting _____ _____
6. Put Downs _____ _____
7. Search for Materials _____ _____
8. Late Arrivals _____ _____

BI-WEEKLY TALLY SHEET FOR INDIVIDUAL PROCESSING CHECKLIST – Date_____

TOTALS

1. Talking Out _____ _____
2. Teasing Others _____ _____
3. Hitting Others _____ _____
4. Leaving Seat _____ _____
5. Distracting _____ _____
6. Put Downs _____ _____
7. Search for Materials _____ _____
8. Late Arrivals _____ _____

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Signature: Renee M. Brennan Scott Reinhart Jeffery A. Dworak

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